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Sarah Theodosia Hall to W S Hall, 9 November 1856]

Woongong

Nov<sup>r</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> 1856

My dearly beloved Shakespeare,

You cannot think how much I was delighted with your kind letter, and wish to assure you that you are not mistaken in your opinion of a *Mother's love* your mother does indeed love her children *one and all*. And now my dear boy as your brothers Anderton and Frank wish to live together at the Blackwood and I think that all things considered it will be for their mutual interest to do so. I should very much wish you to come here and manage for us as you know your father's age and infirmities would not allow him to get about sufficiently to manage the Farm if he were more actively inclined than he is — the place is very much improved and it would be a great pity to let it go back from its present state as your brothers have been at so much expense with it — with keeping six or seven men at a time you must fancy there has been some heavy work done. We do not keep so many now. We have 3 here with two at the Blackwood. They are still improving the place, you will be delighted with the trellis, it looks quite noble. We intend to have the house improved. I bought paper for the parlor nearly two years ago and shall have the 2 bedrooms papered also. You cannot imagine how sorry I am your brothers are obliged to leave the place now it is getting so comfortable. Lazenby has not done this place any good with coming to Kardup as he takes in a great many cattle belonging to the Wesleyans and sends them on to the plains and you know we always depended on the feed there for our dairy and now it is almost eaten off and so you see your brothers were compelled to move to extricate themselves from utter ruin. They have some heavy payments to make up by the end of the year and I am afraid it will take the best part of their cattle to meet these demands. As to my own cattle, I am happy to say I have not lost any since you last heard and I have *twelve* fine calves added to my number. I have sent the principle part of my cattle down to the Blackwood as cattle do so well down there. And now my dear boy you I hope see the necessity of some of you being here as

your father and my self are both getting into years and it would not be very pleasant if we should be taken ill to be at the mercy of servants whom we do not know — death will come and sometimes suddenly as in the case of poor Mrs Curtis she ate a hearty breakfast and died four hours afterwards and Dolbier died last week quite suddenly.

I am sorry for trying to persuade you to leave your brother, I wish he too would give up the diggings and come home. My greatest desire is to see my dear absent children once more, my mind is often wandering amongst you all, Sarah, Fanny, & George. I am often thinking about and hoping I may be spared to see them once more. Letitia has been with us for the last nine months. We expect Robert from the Blackwood about the end of the month as he will have a place prepared by that time, I am sorry Letitia is going so far away, and more than all I shall lose my dear little Freddy, he is a very nice little boy very good and exceedingly forward for his age and can almost run, and prattles very much.

Anderton is very busy reaping the Barley of which he has a very nice crop. The wheat is looking well and is likely to prove the best crop that has been grown here. They have cut about 4 tons of hay and papa is thatching it.

I am glad to hear of Mr Stewart's good fortune and wish to be kindly remembered to all the family, in which I am joined by Letitia and your brothers. We hear Dolbier has left his widow 4000 in cash, and the good will of the business and to Jimmy he has left 1000 in cash and White's farm on the Canning. I am obliged to close as this is going to Perth now. We hear George Leake has an Estate left him with a title belonging to it.

With love to yourself, Henry, Sarah, George and my dear little grandchildren

Believe me

My dear Boy

Your affect Mother

S T Hall

W<sup>m</sup> Shakespeare Hall